

The Role of consumer Mood in the Purchasing Decision Making process

Bellemedjahed Kheira¹

Lecturer class « B », Faculty of Human and Social Sciencies, University Ibn Khaldoun Tiaret, Algeria. Email: kheira.bellemedjahed@univ-tiaret.dz

Received:14/10/2025; Accepted:04/03/2026; Published: 02/06/2026

Abstract:

This paper aims to examine the impact of consumer mood on the purchasing decision-making process through two main axes: (1) consumer mood and (2) the factors influencing purchasing decisions. In the first axis, we discussed the concept of consumer mood, its importance, the activities constituting it, and finally its various roles. In the second axis, we addressed the factors affecting purchasing decisions, such as psychological factors, mechanisms of psychological influence, external factors, and finally the classification of consumers according to mood type.

Keywords: Consumer Mood, Purchasing Decision-Making.

1- Introduction:

Emotional design seeks to create products that evoke consumers' emotions by reviving positive experiences associated with a particular product or a similar one. From this perspective, the design process encourages designers to understand the relationship between the product and the consumer and to analyze the emotions that may influence the latter's perceptions. Ultimately, consumers seek to achieve the highest level of utility, comfort, and happiness, as strong positive or negative emotions remain embedded in individual memory, either as positive experiences that increase the desire to acquire the product or as negative experiences that reinforce avoidance behavior toward it.

The emotional relationship that consumers establish with products is, in fact, a complex one that triggers multiple behavioral levels in which conscious and unconscious internal and external reactions overlap. Product evaluation processes are influenced by logical judgments, such as the product's functionality, ease or difficulty of use, and the necessity of owning or using it, as well as subjective judgments, such as the absence of logical justifications for acquiring it despite the consumer's strong desire to possess or use it.

Purchasing is no longer merely a dry mathematical equation governed only by material needs and available budgets; rather, it has become a complex human experience in which psychological and neurological dimensions intertwine. For many years, classical economic theories assumed that consumers were "rational agents" who gathered information, compared prices, and evaluated quality objectively before making final decisions. However, the cognitive revolution in marketing psychology and behavioral economics has proven this assumption unrealistic. Consumers are ultimately emotional beings whose behaviors are guided by temporary psychological states.

Consumer mood plays a pivotal and often hidden role in guiding the purchasing decision-making process. Mood is a temporary and transient emotional state (such as happiness, sadness, stress, or

relaxation). Although it differs from deep emotions or permanent personality traits, it possesses tremendous influence over how, when, and what consumers buy.

According to Spillers (2006), the products consumers love are the same products they repeatedly use, and once these products disappear from their minds, they are replaced by more desirable and appealing alternatives.

Through this paper, we aim to highlight the role of consumer mood in ensuring successful purchasing decisions by discussing a set of elements summarizing the importance of this topic. In the first axis, we examine the concept of consumer mood, its importance, its constituent activities, and its various roles. In the second axis, we discuss the factors affecting purchasing decisions, including psychological factors, mechanisms of psychological influence, external factors, and consumer segmentation based on mood types.

2- First Axis: Consumer Mood :

Through this axis, we will address the concept of consumer mood, its importance, its constituent activities, and its various roles.

2-1 definition of Consumer Mood:

Consumer Mood refers to the temporary emotional state experienced by consumers during purchasing decisions, which may be influenced by internal factors such as psychological conditions or external factors such as the surrounding environment, thereby affecting their evaluation of products or services. The following are some definitions provided by scholars:

According to Gardner (1985), it is “a temporary affective state that influences how individuals perceive stimuli and make decisions.”

According to Don Norman (2004), it is “a general emotional state that affects how people process information and interact with products. A positive emotional state makes individuals more flexible and open to experimentation, whereas a negative mood drives them toward caution and concentration.”

According to Peter Olson (2005), “mood refers to the general emotional state that affects the way consumers process information and interact with the marketing environment.”

2-2 Importance of Studying Consumer Mood:

Studying consumer mood benefits individuals by providing them with information and data that help them make successful purchasing decisions aligned with their needs, purchasing power, preferences, and tastes. It also assists consumers in identifying their needs and desires according to priorities determined by their financial resources and surrounding environmental conditions (family and society). Furthermore, it helps consumers establish sound priorities for their purchasing decisions within their capabilities (Obeidat, 2001, p.57).

2-3 Activities Constituting Consumer Mood:

Consumer mood consists of several fundamental activities involved in purchasing decision-making, including:

Thinking about the product or service.

Examining advertisements viewed through various advertising media and billboards.

Observing advertisements displayed on streets, buses, or buildings.

Discussing the matter with family and friends and seeking their advice.

Making the purchasing decision.

Visiting stores or places offering the product or service.

Evaluating and comparing product specifications.

Completing the purchase.

(Nouri, 2013, p.70)

2-4 Roles of Consumer Mood:

The role of generating the purchase idea: through creating the idea of purchasing, while gathering information related to it.

The influencing role: resulting from consumer mood when consumers belong to reference groups influencing others or when they are consulted by others.

The decision-maker role: when the individual is responsible for the purchasing decision.

The buyer role: after becoming convinced of a product or service, the consumer purchases or acquires it.

The user role: occurring after the purchase, when the consumer uses the purchased product or service personally or collectively with others. (Nouri, 2013, p.72)

3- Second Axis: Factors Influencing Purchasing Decision-Making : Through this axis, we discuss the factors influencing purchasing decisions, including psychological factors, mechanisms of psychological influence, external factors, and consumer segmentation according to mood type.

3-1 Psychological Factors:

Psychological Factors represent the internal drivers and mental processes that shape consumer mood and direct purchasing behavior. These factors determine how consumers receive external stimuli and transform them into positive or negative emotions.

3-1-1 Sensory Perception and Selective Attention:

Consumers do not interact equally with all environmental stimuli; psychological perception filters information selectively.

Cognitive Overload: When consumers are exposed to advertising messages or product options exceeding their cognitive processing capacity, frustration and stress increase, turning mood negative and leading to “decision paralysis.”

Perception Threshold and Mood Congruence: Consumers’ attention is naturally drawn toward stimuli matching their current emotional state. For example, anxious consumers focus more on safety and warranty features as a psychological mechanism to regulate mood (Krishna & Schwarz, 2021).

3-1-2 Emotional Self-Regulation Mechanisms:

Consumers use shopping activities consciously or unconsciously to manage and regulate their moods.

Compensatory Consumption: When consumers experience psychological setbacks or threats to self-esteem, they may purchase products that provide temporary feelings of power or worthiness to compensate emotionally and improve mood.

Reducing Residual Sadness: Contemporary psychological studies demonstrate that the act of choosing and making purchasing decisions gives consumers a sense of control over their environment, thereby reducing feelings of helplessness and sadness (Kim & Rucker, 2022).

3-1-3 Intrinsic Motivation and Needs:

Mood is closely associated with the underlying psychological motives behind consumer behavior.

Hedonic Motivations: When motives are entertainment-oriented (seeking pleasure, exploration, and novelty), consumers tend to be optimistic, cheerful, and more willing to take risks and try new products.

Utilitarian Motivations: When motives are purely functional (such as purchasing cleaning products or paying bills), consumers adopt a serious and goal-oriented mood and become highly sensitive to obstacles such as slow payment procedures or poor service (Alba & Williams, 2023).

3-2 Mechanisms of Psychological Mood Influence:

Consumer responses vary according to the nature of their mood.

3-2-1 Mood Congruency:

People tend to evaluate objects in ways consistent with their current mood. Happy consumers perceive advertisements, products, and stores more positively and are more likely to recall pleasant memories associated with products. Conversely, consumers in negative moods focus more on drawbacks such as long queues or unfriendly employees.

3-2-2 Mood Regulation:

Consumers attempt to modify their emotional states through shopping by purchasing “self-reward” products such as chocolate, clothing, or spa sessions to increase dopamine levels and reduce stress.

3-3 External Factors Affecting Consumer Mood:

3-3-1 Smart Atmospherics:

Store environments now integrate artificial intelligence and multisensory design to influence consumer mood.

Adaptive lighting and music dynamically change according to visitor flow to reduce stress.

Ambient scents stimulate relaxation hormones, prolong store visits, and improve mood (Spence & Petit, 2022).

3-3-2 Social Context and Crowding:

The human element within shopping environments significantly affects consumer mood.

Severe crowding generates spatial anxiety and negative moods, encouraging consumers to leave quickly.

Employees’ emotional intelligence and personalized support can transform negative consumer moods into positive ones (Li et al., 2023).

3-3-3 Weather and Climate Dynamics:

External natural environments physiologically and psychologically affect consumer spending and mood. Moderately sunny days are associated with higher serotonin levels, encouraging impulsive purchasing and greater acceptance of higher prices. In contrast, extreme heat waves generate thermal stress and hostile moods, pushing consumers toward online shopping (Duan & Zhang, 2024).

3-3-4 Digital and Social Media Feed:

Smartphone screens have become the most influential external environment affecting contemporary consumers. For example, while watching entertaining short videos on platforms such as TikTok or Instagram Reels, consumers may transfer their positive moods to subsequent advertisements, thereby increasing responsiveness to digital purchasing (Bakker & Van, 2023).

3-4 Consumer Segmentation According to Mood Type:

Consumer segmentation based on temperament or mood combines personality psychology with consumer behavior to understand how stable personality traits or temporary moods influence purchasing decisions.

3-4-1 Traditional Segmentation According to the Four Temperaments:

According to Orth et al. (2010), this classification is derived from the classical theory of the four temperaments.

A. The Sanguine Consumer:

Optimistic, sociable, energetic, and novelty-seeking.

Highly inclined toward impulsive buying and strongly influenced by attractive visual environments and positive social interactions.

B. The Melancholic Consumer:

Analytical, cautious, organized, and prone to anxiety. Makes detailed comparisons before purchasing and values quality, warranties, and long-term benefits.

C. The Choleric Consumer:

Ambitious, decisive, goal-oriented, and sometimes impatient. Prefers efficient shopping experiences and products symbolizing power and competitiveness.

D. The Phlegmatic Consumer:

Calm, peaceful, balanced, and resistant to sudden change. Demonstrates strong brand loyalty and prefers familiar stores and friendly service interactions.

3-4-2 Regulatory Focus Theory:

This modern academic model classifies consumers into two major types:

A. Promotion-Focused Consumer:

Motivated by achievement, aspirations, and gains. More willing to take purchasing risks and try innovative products and brands (Arnold et al., 2012).

B. Prevention-Focused Consumer:

Motivated by safety, duty, and avoiding losses. Prefers guarantees, return policies, and secure purchasing environments and strongly avoids risk (Arnold & Reynolds, 2012).

3-4-3 Situational Mood Typologies:

A. Therapeutic / Compensatory Consumer:

Enters the marketplace in a negative mood such as sadness or stress.

Practices “retail therapy” by purchasing self-rewarding products to improve emotional well-being.

B. Celebratory Consumer:

Enters shopping environments already experiencing positive emotions due to success, rewards, or pleasant weather. More likely to spend generously, tip more, and purchase entertainment-oriented products to maintain positive feelings.

C. The Stressed / Time-Constrained Consumer Mood Type: This consumer is influenced by a mood characterized by external anxiety and severe time pressure. Purchasing Behavior: They tend to avoid visual complexity and crowded environments. Their behavior is directed toward fast digital options and instant delivery services. If forced into traditional shopping environments, they search for clear signage and quick self-checkout applications to reduce psychological stress (Bakker & Van, 2023).

4- Conclusion:

In an era where markets have become saturated with functionally and technically similar products, performance and quality alone are no longer sufficient to ensure distinction or consumer loyalty. Emotion and mood have become fundamental elements in human interaction with products and services, highlighting the importance of emotional design as an effective strategic tool capable of creating a genuine difference in consumer experience.

Consumers no longer respond merely to “what the product does,” but rather to “how the product makes them feel.” This represents a major transformation in both design and marketing philosophy. From this perspective, understanding consumer mood and monitoring psychological states during purchasing or product usage enable designers and marketers to create deeper and more human-centered experiences.

The purchasing decision-making process is not a linear path governed solely by strict laws of utility and logic. Rather, it is a flexible and dynamic process that can be shaped and reshaped by consumers’ temporary moods. Psychological and marketing evidence has demonstrated that mood, despite its temporary and superficial nature, possesses significant guiding power that often surpasses traditional marketing strategies. Mood can transform cautious consumers into impulsive buyers during moments of stress through “retail therapy,” and it can increase consumers’ tolerance toward higher prices during moments of joy and self-celebration.

Understanding the role of mood in purchasing behavior opens new horizons and provides deeper insight into human nature within consumer contexts. It is an invitation to reconsider emotion as an essential partner of rationality and an acknowledgment that behind every wallet opened and every “Buy Now” button clicked lies a human heart seeking comfort, safety, or change, even through a product purchased during a fleeting emotional moment.

5- References:

Obeidat, Mohammad Ibrahim. (2001). *Consumer Behavior*. Dar Wael for Publishing and Distribution: Jordan.

Nouri, Mounir. (2013). *Contemporary Consumer Behavior*. National Office for Algerian Publications: Algeria.

Gardner, Meryl P. (1985). "Mood States and Consumer Behavior: A Critical Review." *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 281–300.

Norman.A; Andrew.O; Revelle.W.(2004). *Emotional design*.

Peter, J. Paul, & Olson, Jerry C. (2005). *Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy*. McGraw-Hill Education .

Spillers.F.(2006). What is emotion design ? (a practical definition).

Krishna, A., & Schwarz, N. (2021). Sensory marketing, embodiment, and consumer mood: A review of cognitive and affective mechanisms. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 31(2), 402-430.

Kim, S., & Rucker, D. D. (2022). Compensatory consumption: A psychological review of how and when consumers shop to regulate mood and identity. *Consumer Psychology Review*, 5(1), 74-92.

- Alba, J. W., & Williams, P. (2023). Pleasure and pain in consumer choice: Modern perspectives on hedonic and utilitarian shopping value. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 40(1), 15-32.
- Orth, U. R., Limon, Y., & Rose, G. (2010). Store atmospherics and consumer temperaments in retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 17(6), 495-503.
- Arnold, M. J., & Reynolds, K. E. (2012). Approach and avoidance motivation: The role of regulatory focus in consumer mood management during shopping. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(4), 552-559.
- Bakker, M., & van der Voort, L. (2023). The scroll-and-shop phenomenon: How social media mood induction impacts online consumer choice. *Computers in Human Behavior*.
- Spence, C., & Petit, O. (2022). Designing multisensory store environments: A review of the impact of ambient scents and music on consumer mood and behavior. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 123, 312-322.
- Li, Y., & Wu, L. (2023). Sunny days, sunny moods? The longitudinal impact of weather on online and offline retail spending. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 60(2), 295-314.
- Duan, Y., & Zhang, R. (2024). Climate emotions and shopping: How ambient temperature and weather fluctuations dictate consumer mood and impulse buying. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 93.